

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KINSHA 05204 222247Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ARA-10 ACDA-12
TRSE-00 HA-05 /100 W

-----082115 222303Z /62

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9915

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMCONSUL LUBUMBASHI

AMCONSUL BUKAVU

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINSHASA 5204

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CG, PINS

SUBJECT: SHABA ATTACK: ZAIRIAN CONTROLLED PRESS COMMENTS ON
US, BELGIAN AND FRENCH ROLES

1. DURING PRESIDENT MOBUTU'S MAY 20 VISIT TO KOLWEZI, HE
TOLD THE PRESS HE HOPED THE FRENCH TROOPS WOULD STAY "FOR
SOME TIME."
2. ON MAY 21, MOBUTU WAS INTERVIEWED BY WEST GERMAN TV,
AN INTERVIEW DESCRIBED IN THE ZAIRIAN NEWSPAPER SOLONGO MAY
22. ASKED TO SPECIFY THE DURATION OF THE INTERVENTION OF FOREIGN
TROOPS IN KOLWEZI, MOBUTU SAID THAT THE MISSION OF THE BELGIAN
CONTINGENT, WHICH RETURNS TO BRUSSELS TOMORROW (I.E. MAY 22),
WAS TO INSURE THE EVACUATION OF THE BELGIAN SURVIVORS,
WHILE THE FRENCH TROOPS HAD "ANOTHER MISSION". CONCERNING THE
INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE CONFLICT, MOBUTU SAID ZAIRE WILL
NEVER ACCEPT THE PRESENCE OF FOREIGN TROOPS ON ITS MILITARY BASES.
MOBUTU ALSO MENTIONED "AMERICAN PROTESTS DIRECTED AGAINST THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 KINSHA 05204 222247Z

SOVIET-CUBAN COALITION WHICH SECRETARY VANCE MADE TO THE SOVIET
EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON MAY 20."

3. ZAIRE PRESS AGENCY (AZAP) OF MAY 21 TERMED THE ATTITUDE
"DISPLAYED SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THE HOSTILITIES BY BELGIAN
FONMIN SIMONET AS "EQUIVOCAL AND STEANGE." AFTER REFERRING
TO AN INTERVIEW WHICH MOBUTU WAS SAID TO HAVE GRANTED THE

MORNING OF MAY 2, AZAP EDITORIALIZED: "IT HAS BEEN LEARNED FROM A BRUSSELS SOURCE THAT MR. SIMONET'S EQUIVOCAL ATTITUDE STEMS FROM HIS DESIRE TO HUMOR AT ANY COST THE SOCIALIST CAMP-- PARTICULARLY CUBANS, ANGOLANS AND RUSSIANS -- IN CONNECTION WITH THIS AFFAIR DUE TO HIS UPCOMING VISIT TO ANGOLA." "ONE WONDERS IF MINISTER SIMONET WILL NOT TAKE ADVANTAGE OF HIS VISIT TO LUANDA IN JUNE TO CONGRATULATE THE ASSASSINS OF THE BELGIAN FAMILIES IN KOLWEZI, ASSASSINS WHO ARE PRESENTLY IN ANGOLA, AND TO DRINK WITH THEM NOT A GLASS OF CHAMPAGNE, BUT A GLASS OF BLOOD -- THE BLOOD OF THE INNOCENT BELGIAN VICTIMS."

4. ON MAY 21, MOBUT PAID ANOTHER VISIT TO KOLWEZI. WHILE ENROUTE HE GAVE AN INTERVIEW TO FRENCH JOURNALISTS FROM LE POINT, AND L' EXPRESS, IN WHICH HE PRAISED FRANCE'S READINESS TO SUPPORT AFRICAN COUNTRIES WHICH MUST SAFEGUARD THEIR FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE FROM THE MANEUVERS OF FOREIGN POWERS BY ANY MEANS. HE ALSO STATED THAT HE HAD ASKED PRESIDENT GISCARD TO ALLOW THE CONTINGENT OF FRENCH LEGIONNAIRES TO REMAIN IN KOLWEZI A LITTLE LONGER, AND EXPRESSED THE CONVICTION THAT THIS APPEAL WILL BE HEEDED. THE AZAP ACCOUNT OF THE INTERVIEW WENT ON TO NOT THAT "AT KOLWEZI ITSELF THE BELGIAN MISSION TO EVACUATE EUROPEANS IS ALMOST AT AN END. THUS, THE BELGIAN UNITS WHICH WERE (WORD UNCLEAR) IN KOLWEZI A FEW DAYS AGO ARE PREPARING TO RETURN TO THEIR COUNTRY."

5. SECOND PAGE OF ZAIRIAN NEWSPAPER "SALONGO" FOR MAY 21
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KINSHA 05204 222247Z

PRESENTED SEVERAL ITEMS CONCERNING THE US AS WELL AS OTHER COUNTRIES' REACTION TO THE SHABA ATTACK. ONE SUCH ITEM ENTITLED "CUBA IMPLICATED BY USA" WENT ON TO STATE THAT, THE "UNITED STATES OFFICIALLY ACCUSED CUBA ON FRIDAY OF PREPARING THE KATANGAN EX-GENDARMES FOR THE INVASION OF SHABA. IN EFFECT CONTRADICTING DECLARATIONS MADE EARLIER, THE STATE DEPARTMENT DECLARED HAVING PROOF THAT THE INVADERS HAVE RECENTLY BEEN TRAINED AND ARMED WITH SOVIET MATERIAL BY CUBAN ADVISORS IN ANGOLA." THE ITEM CONCLUDED BY STATING THAT, "IT IS CONSIDERED IN THE AMERICAN CAPITAL THAT THE AMERICAN ACCUSATIONS AGAINST HAVAN CAN ONLY ENCOURAGE THOSE OPPOSED TO CUBAN ADVENTURISM IN AFRICA." ELIMA MAY 21 FRONTPAGE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S STATEMENT THAT "REBLES HAD BEEN RECENTLY TRAINED BY CUBANS IN ANGOLA" AND PROVIDED SOVIET-MANUFACTURED ARMS.

6. A SECOND ITEM ON THE SAME PAGE ENTITLED "AMERICAN AIRPLANES," REPORTED THE AMERICAN DECISION TO SUPPLY 18 CARGO AIRCRAFT TO TRANSPORT FRENCH PERSONNEL AND BELGIAN AND FRENCH MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ZAIRE.

7. ON SUNDAY, MAY 21, AZAP ANNOUNCED THAT PRESIDENT MOBUTU

HAS ORDERED THE ZAIRIAN BANKS TO BLOCK CERTAIN IMPORTS VITAL TO THE COUNTRY "IN ORDER TO PAY THE NEARLY DOLS 464,000 THAT REPRESENTS ZAIRE'S UNPAID AND OVERDUE DEBTS" TO THE UNITED STATES. ACCORDING TO AZAP, " ZAIRE'S OVERDUE DEBTS, WHICH OF LATE HAVE BEEN THE OBJECT OF DISCUSSIONS IN THE US CONGRESS AND WHOSE PRIOR SETTLEMENT WAS A CONDITION FOR THE UNITED STATES TO GRANT THE MILITARY CREDITS REQUESTED BY ZAIRE TO CONFRONT THE SITUATION PROVOKED BY THE REBLES IN SOUTHWESTERN SHABA, HAVE BEEN TOTALLY ELIMINATED BY THIS COUNTRY. ON THE VERY SAME DAY THAT HE LEARNED OF THE US CONGRESS' CONDITIONS, (WORD INDISTINCT) IN KINSHASA, AND OUT OF CONCERN FOR THE NATION'S DIGNITY, BENERAL MOBUTU ORDERED THE BANKS IN ZAIRE TO STOP CERTAIN VITAL IMPORTS IN ORDER TO PAY THE NEARLY DOLS 464,000 REPRESENTING THESE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 KINSHA 05204 222247Z

OVERDUE DEBTS INCREASED BY INTEREST. "APPROACHED BY THIS AGENCY THIS MORNING, THE FINANCIAL CIRCLES OF ZAIRE'S BANKING SECTOR CONFIRMED THIS INFORMATION, BUT VOICED THEIR SURPRISE OVER THE FACT THAT THIS HAS NOT BEEN MADE PUBLIC BY THE US CONGRESS ITSELF," AZAP CONCLUDED. FOREGOING INFORMATION HAS BEEN SUBJECT OF LOCAL RADIO NEWSCASTS AS WELL AS AFP TICKER ITEMS WHICH CAST US IN ROLE OF DEMANDING LOAN COLLECTOR AT VERY DIFFICULT TIME FOR GOZ.
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